

COVID-19: Guidance for Organized Sports and Performing Arts from the Wyoming Department of Health

February 15, 2021

Background

Public health orders continue and are modified periodically. All orders are designed to limit the spread of the COVID-19 virus. Key definitions and order provisions are contained in each order. Questions regarding enforcement and interpretation of orders should be directed to your County Public Health Offices. This document provides guidance from the Wyoming Department of Health for movie theaters and performance centers.

A copy of the current statewide orders can be found at: <https://covid19.wyo.gov/>. This guidance document is meant to provide guidance on how organized sports activities and artistic performances can occur while keeping individuals and families safe, and while continuing to mitigate the spread of COVID-19. Organized sports activities and artistic performances are permitted under the current orders under the following guidelines.

This guidance is in alignment with the Wyoming High School Activities Association [Smart Start Guidance](#) and these recommendations extend into other school settings beyond high school.

A copy of the current statewide orders can be found at: <https://covid19.wyo.gov/>.

School-Associated Sports and Arts

1. **Practices and Rehearsals.** Practice, rehearsal, or other activities that involve only school staff and students, and do not involve non-students (e.g., parents, families, or members of the public), should be conducted according to the provisions for K-12 schools, colleges, universities, and trade schools located in paragraph 9 of Statewide Order 1, stating:
 - a. Practices and rehearsals can occur with up to 50 students and teachers in each separate room.
 - b. Six feet of separation should be maintained to the extent possible unless students are engaged in athletic activity that requires close contact.
 - c. Masks must be worn when 6 feet of distance can't be maintained, except when performing strenuous athletic activity or when playing an instrument that can't be played while wearing a mask (though 6 feet of distance is highly encouraged).
2. **Games or competitive events involving spectators.** Outdoor and indoor events attended by non-students (parents, families, or members of the public) are considered an event according to the provisions in paragraph 6 of Statewide Order 2.
 - a. Participants can congregate in groups of up to 25. "Congregate" means to interact without physical distancing in close proximity. Basketball games, hockey games, and wrestling competitions can occur because these close contact sports involve 25 or fewer participants competing without distancing.
 - b. Other participants, including players who are not actively engaged in competition, band members, participants in a theatrical play or other artistic performance, and cheer teams, may also congregate in groups of up to 25 people. At least 6 feet of separation must be maintained between different groups of 25 people. Physical distancing of all individuals by at least 6 feet is highly recommended whenever possible.
 - c. The statewide public health order allows up to 25% of venue capacity with a maximum of 500 spectators in indoor venues and up to 50% capacity with a maximum of 1,000 spectators in outdoor venues. Groups of no more than 8 individuals must be separated from other groups by at least six feet



of distance. Groups should only contain members of the same household; exceptions to the group size of 8 can be made if all members of the group are also members of the same household.

- d. All spectators, coaches, staff, and officials should wear face coverings at all times. Players and participants should refrain from wearing face coverings during strenuous activity, but should wear face coverings at other times. Band participants can remove their face mask if necessary to play their instrument.

Organized Sports and Performing Arts Not Associated with Schools

1. **Practices and Rehearsals.** Practices and rehearsals must be conducted as an event according to the provisions in paragraph 6 of Statewide Order 2. Participants practicing in the sport (unassociated with school) can congregate in groups of 25. Different groups of 25 must be separated from other groups of 25 by a distance of at least six feet. The total number of people practicing in an indoor space should be no more than 25% venue capacity up to 500 people. The total number of people practicing in an outdoor space should be no more than 50% venue capacity up to 1,000 people. WDH highly recommends groups that are congregating without distancing to be as small as possible.
2. **Games or competitive events involving spectators.** Organized sports should follow the same guidelines as games or competitive events involving spectators for school-associated sports and according to paragraph 6 of Statewide Order 2.
 - a. Participants can congregate in groups of up to 25 individuals. Congregate means to interact without physical distancing. Basketball games, hockey games, and wrestling can occur because these close contact sports involve twelve or fewer participants competing at any one time without distancing.
 - b. Other participants, including players who are not actively engaged in competition, band members, and cheer teams, may also congregate in groups of up to 25 people. At least 6 feet of separation must be maintained between different groups of 25 people. Physical distancing of all individuals by at least 6 feet is highly encouraged whenever possible.
 - c. The statewide public health orders allow up to 25% of venue capacity with a maximum of 500 spectators in indoor venues and up to 50% capacity with a maximum of 1,000 spectators in outdoor venues. Groups of no more than 8 individuals must be separated from other groups by at least six feet of distance. Groups should only contain members of the same household; exceptions to the group size of 8 can be made if all members of the group are also members of the same household.
 - d. All spectators, coaches, staff, and officials should wear face coverings at all times indoors. Players and participants should refrain from wearing face coverings during strenuous activity, but should wear face coverings at other times. Band participants can remove their face mask if necessary to play their instrument.

Guidelines for All Sporting and Performing Arts Activities

1. **Concessions.** Concessions may operate according to the requirements for restaurants and other food service establishments in the Statewide Public Health Order #1 (see Restaurant guidance [here](#)). It is the responsibility of the event organizer/staff to ensure that people do not congregate with each other – and that they maintain adequate social distancing – while in line for concessions.
2. **Close-contact sports.** Indoor* contact sports such as basketball, hockey, and wrestling can occur. The WDH recommends that these sports take place in accordance with the provisions outlined by the National Federation of State High School Associations and the [Wyoming High School Activities Association](#).

**Indoor contact sports likely pose the highest risk of COVID-19 spread compared with other types of sports. Limiting the size of participant groups is especially important. Six feet of physical separation should be maintained whenever players are not actively engaged in close contact drills or play. Organizers, players, and parents should be aware that one participant with COVID-19 could expose multiple other participants, resulting in the need to quarantine for 14 days.*

3. **Rosters and contact tracing.** The WDH recommends that sporting events, teams, and performing arts groups maintain updated rosters of all players, coaches, participants, and volunteers to help facilitate and enable contact tracing in the event that COVID-19 is detected in a participant.
4. **Symptom screening.** Athletes, participants, coaches, and officials should be screened for symptoms of respiratory illness to the greatest extent possible, and not allowed to participate if symptoms or exposure to COVID-19 are present. Please see the WDH screening guidance [here](#). The Wyoming High School Activities Association [guidance](#) also contains a screening tool that may be used for allowable school-sanctioned sports. This tool can be used to meet the necessary documentation for contact tracing as well. School-sanctioned sports screening should include a temperature check.
5. **Equipment and other contact.** Efforts should be made to limit unnecessary physical contact between players, coaches, and other participants (high-fives, hugs, etc.). Use of shared equipment (towels, clothing, shoes, sports-specific equipment, instruments etc.) should be minimized; when this is not possible, equipment should be sanitized between each use.
 - a. Participants should not share water bottles. Water-filling stations may be utilized but should be sanitized after every practice or event.
 - b. Schedules should be staggered as much as possible so that there is sufficient time for participants of one event to leave the area or facility before the next group arrives or enters the area.
6. **Cohorts.** Workouts, practices, or rehearsals should be conducted using cohorts, with the same individuals always working out, practicing, or rehearsing together. Cohorts should be as small as possible. This will limit exposure if someone develops an infection.
7. **Travel.** While there is no statewide order prohibiting team or group travel, there is a risk for COVID-19 transmission during transport (if players or participants are carpooling or traveling on a bus, for example). Furthermore, participants might be at increased risk of getting COVID-19 if traveling to an area with a higher number of COVID-19 cases. Travel over long distances to participate in sporting or artistic events is not recommended by WDH.
 - a. If transport occurs, it is recommended that the organizing entity maintain a record of children and adults transported and which vehicle they were in for contact tracing purposes, if necessary.
 - b. Social distancing is recommended during transport, to the greatest extent practicable. If six feet distance cannot be maintained, face coverings should be worn.
8. **Notification.** WDH recommends that organizers/staff or coaches inform parents and participants of social distancing and other expectations for preventing transmission of COVID-19 before conducting practices, games, performances, and other events.
9. **Health Officer Collaboration.** Schools, event organizers, and participants must follow the health officials recommendations for isolation and quarantine in the event that COVID-19 transmission potentially occurred during the event.

The CDC has provided considerations, recommendations, and resources for youth sporting activities, which can be accessed [here](#). General guidance for school activities can be found [here](#).

For more information about the COVID-19 outbreak please visit: health.wyo.gov or cdc.gov

